

IN 171 – Serving Community - Fieldwork 1
Wartburg Theological Seminary – Fall 2024
Rev. Stacey Nalean-Carlson, Instructor

Course Description

This course invites both action and reflection. Students partner with community service organizations to serve the common good, engaging a minimum of thirty hours per semester in service, practicing accompaniment, and exploring bridge-building between church and community. Typically, fieldwork is completed in service organizations, although service can also be offered in a congregation, parish, or other organized ministry. Collaborative Learning students are especially encouraged to engage in this course through opportunities available in their ministry sites, with already established community partners.

Course Objectives

- To serve the community through contextual engagement
- To begin to develop a ministry identity in the public square
- To collaborate with community service organizations
- To explore building bridges between the church and the community
- To demonstrate an openness to personal growth

Pastoral-Diaconal Practices

This course fosters the “Twelve Pastoral-Diaconal Practices” of Wartburg Seminary, especially:

- **Practice of Collegiality**
Leads in a way that is responsive to the situation and promotes team building. Creates collegial groups within and beyond the church for promoting many forms of ministry.
- **Practice of Ecclesial Partnership**
Displays a healthy sense of connectedness with the whole church. Fosters partnership with the ELCA and ecumenical openness.
- **Practice of Curiosity**
Is fundamentally curious, employing creativity in the use of language. Is open to grow beyond current perspectives and eager to pursue learning with intellectual depth.

Course Procedures and Requirements

Castle Commons

All course information is available through the Castle Commons course site.
All required submissions are made through the Castle Commons course site.

Types of Fieldwork

Fieldwork may consist of any combination of the following:

- **Direct service**—person-to-person, face-to-face service in and through a specific organization, like serving at a shelter
- **Indirect Service**—working on behalf of but not in the presence of the person or organization you are impacting, like organizing a food drive for an area food bank
- **Research**—gathering and presenting information on areas of interest and need that serve the community, like researching state and national laws on cyber-bullying and leading an adult forum on the topic

- **Advocacy**—using your voice and other resources to speak out on issues and engage in advocacy, like becoming an active participant in anti-racism protests

Fieldwork Placement

If you need assistance finding a place to engage in fieldwork, speak with the course instructor.

Fieldwork Proposal

All students will submit their Fieldwork Proposal through the Castle Commons Course site **by September 23, 2024**. This proposal will identify the site/context in which you will serve the community, the name and email address of the person serving as your supervisor at the site, and a guiding question for each of the three pastoral-diaconal practices emphasized in this course. For example: *What is the role of trust in establishing effective partnerships?*

Fieldwork Journal

Students will keep a journal, reflecting weekly on experiences in their site/context. Journal entries may include:

- A description of the fieldwork
- Your experience of the fieldwork
- Reflection on your evolving ministry identity in the public square
- Reflection on the guiding questions identified in your fieldwork proposal
- New questions raised by the week's experiences

Students will choose a portion of their weekly journal entry to share with their peers on Castle Commons. These submissions are due **by noon on Thursday each week**, beginning September 26 and ending December 5. Do **not** spend more than one hour each week writing the journal entry, posting to Castle Commons, **and responding to at least two journal entries posted by peers**.

Resources for Reflection

Students will consider at least two of the following resources and include reflection on these resources as part of at least two of their journal entries.

- 1) "How Curiosity Will Save Us"
https://www.ted.com/talks/monica_guzman_how_curiosity_will_save_us_jan_2022
- 2) "First Step to Collaboration? Don't Be So Defensive!"
https://www.ted.com/talks/jim_tamm_first_step_to_collaboration_don_t_be_so_defensive?referrer=playlist-how_to_boost_your_team_s_productivity&autoplay=true
- 3) A Brief History of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA
<http://54.89.191.29/about-us/history/>

Plenaries

All students are required to participate in **two plenaries** during the semester. These plenaries will be held on Thursday, September 12 and Thursday, December 12, from 11:40am-12:30pm in Fritschel 207 and on Zoom. Additionally, optional check-in plenaries will be held twice during the semester—Thursday, October 10 and Thursday, November 14, from 11:40am-12:30pm in Fritschel 207 and on Zoom.

Final Documentation of Fieldwork

All students will submit a record of the hours spent working with their fieldwork sites. This must be signed by their site supervisor, attesting to the student's work at the site. Additional comments from the site supervisor are welcome.

Grading

Fieldwork is credit/ no credit. Students who submit their fieldwork proposal, weekly journal entry (two of which incorporate reflection on a course resource), two responses each week to the journal entries of others, and final documentation can expect to receive credit.

Academic Policies & Accommodations

All writing should follow the style sheet/guidelines as described in the WTS Student Handbook, including using proper attribution and inclusive language. Cases of cheating or plagiarism will also be handled according to Student Handbook policies. **Seminary policy provides, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations** to students who have documented disability conditions that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students are responsible for informing the instructor of any documented disability by the end of the first week of class or upon subsequent diagnosis. Documentation on disability conditions is kept in a confidential file.

Course Contact

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